



CANADIAN SUPPLY CHAIN FOOD SAFETY COALITION

COALITION CANADIENNE DE LA FILIÈRE ALIMENTAIRE POUR LA SALUBRITÉ DES ALIMENTS

28 January 2010

The Right Honourable Stephen Harper, M.P. P.C.
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE
111 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
Canada, K1A 0A6

Dear Prime Minister:

Re: Proposals for the Speech from the Throne – Food Safety

Given that the safety of the food supply remains a primary concern of the public, agri-food industry stakeholders and your government, the Canadian Supply Chain Food Safety Coalition (CSCFSC) anticipates that food safety initiatives will be included in the upcoming Speech from the Throne. On that premise the CSCFSC would like to suggest that a process of engagement with the relevant stakeholders that builds on your government's past consultations specific to *Canada's Food and Consumer Safety Action Plan* be considered as a first step prior to the introduction of legislation.

CSCFSC believes that a new round of consultations between the Ministers of Health and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and the agri-food industry, amongst other stakeholders would be timely and relevant to shaping the anticipated legislation and take into account developments since early 2008, including:

- Your government's introduction of proposals to amend the food safety sections of Food and Drug Act (Bill C-51) in the 39th Parliament.
- The tragic listeria incident in 2008, which led to the recommendations of the Weatherhill inquiry, to the work of the House of Commons Subcommittee on Food Safety and its recommendations and to changes in government policies.
- The ministerial consultations with the provincial and territorial governments and the agreement to proceed with a limited number of common food safety initiatives.
- The expected passage of major reforms to food safety legislation in the United States that will significantly change the regulatory environment in our continental food market.

The Canadian Supply Chain Food Safety Coalition is the only organization in Canada that represents all segments of the food chain from input suppliers through primary production, processing, manufacturing, import, transportation and distribution to final marketing at retail, food service and export (see attached member's list). Formed in December 2000 its mandate is to foster a new national approach to food safety policy development that emphasizes consultation, harmonization and transparency and is based on partnership within industry and between industry and all levels of government (national, provincial and local).

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Early in 2009, the Coalition completed an industry dialogue on the future direction of food safety with our members and with other organizations in the agri-food supply chain. The recommendations of that initiative, which we would welcome to the opportunity to bring to the consultations table, were based on four guiding principles:

Principle #1: Food safety is a shared responsibility of all participants in the supply chain (input suppliers, businesses involved with the production, processing, manufacturing, importing, distribution, retailing and marketing of food), all levels of government and consumers.

Principle #2: Governments at all levels, the agri-food industry and other stakeholders should foster and facilitate the development of an integrated, co-ordinated, and national approach to food safety policy and regulation based on sound scientific risk assessment and risk management principles and on international standards.

Principle #3: Industry and government food safety initiatives should encourage the implementation of HACCP and/or HACCP-based food safety systems by businesses all along the supply chain.

Principle #4: Food businesses, governments and other stakeholders have a responsibility to adequately resource, proactively manage, update, maintain and continually improve their individual and collaborative food safety systems and food safety initiatives.

Mr. Prime Minister, the Canadian Supply Chain Food Safety Coalition, looks forward to working with your government to achieve a national, coordinated approach to food safety that is based on partnership within industry and between industry and all levels of government (national, provincial and local). We urge you to consider the two stage approach that we have suggested for achieving this objective over the course of the coming session of Parliament.

Sincerely



Albert F. Chambers
Executive Director

Cc: Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Minister of Health
Honourable Gerry Ritz, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
CSCFSC Members

Attachment – List of CSCFSC Members – November 2009